



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Patent and Trademark Office

Address: COMMISSIONER OF PATENTS AND TRADEMARKS
Washington, D.C. 20231

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.
-----------------	-------------	----------------------	---------------------

09/941,500 08/29/01 NELSON

T P1062P2P1

R. WILLIAM BEARD, JR.
BAKER BOTTS L.L.P.
910 LOUISIANA STREET
HOUSTON TX 77002-4995

PM82/1010

EXAMINER

DOBSEY, D	ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
-----------	----------	--------------

3635

DATE MAILED:

10/10/01

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	09/941,500	Thomas John Nelson
Examiner	Art Unit	
Dennis L Dorsey	3635	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM
THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 29 August 2001.

2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.

3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1-62 is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) 1-47 and 59-62 is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6) Claim(s) 48-58 is/are rejected.

7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

11) The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) approved b) disapproved by the Examiner.
If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.

12) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

13) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

14) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
a) The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.

15) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
 2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
 3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____ .

4) Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____.
 5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
 6) Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

2. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

3. Claims 48-52 and 54-56 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Foreign Patent Gebrauchsmuster G 86 04 004.9.

Patent 86 04 004.9 teaches all the limitations of the above claims including a panels (2), metal connector with projection (8), extensions (6), protrusions (9) that extend vertical less than projection, and recesses (5).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

4. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

5. Claims 53 and 57-58 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Patent 86 04 004.9

Patent 86 04 004.9 teaches all the limitations of the claims except specifically that the projections and protrusions extend the entire length of the connector and that the connector is made of plastic. It would have been obvious to extend the protrusion and the projections the entire length of the connector requiring only routine skill in the

Art Unit: 3635

art and as suggested by Figure 2 of the Patent 86 04 004.9. It would have been obvious for one skilled in the art at the time the invention was made to make the connector out of plastic since it is held to be within the general skill of a worker in the art to select a known material on basis of its suitability for the intended use as a matter of design choice.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Dennis L Dorsey whose telephone number is 703-306-9137. The examiner can normally be reached on Tuesday-Friday 7:30am-6:00pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Carl Friedman can be reached on 703-308-0839. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are 703-305-3597 for regular communications and 703-3053597 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703-308-1020.

DLD~~00~~,
September 30, 2001


BETH A. STEPHAN
PRIMARY EXAMINER